This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

C O N F I D E N T I A L COLOMBO 000438

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR SA, SA/INS, IO, DRL

NSC FOR E. MILLARD

E.O. 12958:   DECL: 03/11/14
TAGS: PREL PHUM CE UNHRC
SUBJECT: UNHRC: Ambassador reviews U.S. priorities at
upcoming session with Sri Lankan Foreign Secretary

Refs: (A) Colombo 402; (B) State 41252

(U) Classified by Ambassador Jeffrey J. Lunstead.
Reasons 1.5 (b,d).

¶1. (C) As requested Ref B, Ambassador discussed
upcoming UNHRC session with Foreign Secretary Bernard
Goonetilleke on March 11. Goonetilleke is the number
two in the Foreign Ministry and highest-ranking career
official. (Embassy had previously presented similar
material to MFA's Director General for UN, Human Rights,
and Multilateral Affairs -- see Ref A.) Ambassador
noted that we were trying to make the UNHRC a more
effective and credible organization, described U.S.
goals for the UNHRC session, and asked Goonetilleke what
Sri Lanka's goals were.

¶2. (C) Goonetilleke candidly replied that the GSL had
not focused on these issues thus far, and was "mainly
reactive" to them, developing its positions as issues
came up. He noted that our delegations had
traditionally cooperated well in Geneva, while also
noting that there would of course be issues where we
differed. He did say that Foreign Minister Tyronne
Fernando would attend the high-level portion of the
session.

¶3. (C) COMMENT: Sri Lanka's actions in the UNHRC are
traditionally driven by a variety of (sometimes
conflicting) factors: desire to be close to the U.S.,
sympathy for smaller nations with big neighbors (e.g.,
Cuba), and old-think in the MFA combined with desire not
to alienate traditional NAM buddies (e.g., Iran.) or
powerful neighbors (e.g., China). We can probably get
Sri Lankan cooperation on some of our issues, but almost
certainly not on all. Keys will be:
--working with Sri Lankan delegation in Geneva, and
--approaching Foreign Secretary here on key issues where
Sri Lanka feels it has some maneuverability.
END COMMENT.

¶4. (U) Minimize considered.

LUNSTEAD